

Sister Cities of Durham Report to City Council Working Session, 1:00 pm, Thursday, October 8, 2015

Brady Surles, President, Sister Cities of Durham.

Sister Cities is celebrating our 40th Anniversary, with the Proclamation signed by the Mayor of Durham, England on Sept. 1, 1975.

This partnership included some correspondence and occasional visits, but no concrete programs.

1. In the 1980s, some Durham residents began exploring the possibilities of developing closer ties, especially under the leadership of Dot Borden.
2. This led to your predecessors on our City Council approving the request to add three additional Sister Cities which led to our links with Kostroma, Toyama and Arusha. Recently we added Zhuzhou.
3. Our programs have included partnerships with the following groups:
 - 3 years with Durham Technical Community College and the Toyama College of Foreign Languages
 - 5 Open World Leadership Center Grants to bring Russian emerging leaders to Durham
 - A 3 year partnership with The Herald Sun's "We Are Durham" section promoting local organizations
 - A 3 year partnership with Durham County Library for programs in their Humanities Series
 - A 10 year partnership with Duke Gardens and the Asiatic Arboretum -- The Japanese Tea House, and now plans for a Chinese Garden.
 - A 20 year partnership with the Family Medicine Center at Duke and the Toyama City Hospital
 - Working with the Rotary Club of Durham and their international projects
 - Working with LINKS of Durham and the Triangle for support
 - Working with area Episcopal Churches for projects in Tanzania
 - Supporting the Durham Children's Choir on their international tours
 - Working with Central Park to create the Sister Cities Grove of Trees
 - Partnering with the Carolina China Council, which helped us establish Zhuzhou as a Sister City, and it brings Chinese visitors to our area, and worked to make Hunan Province the Sister State with NC.
 - Partnering with at least 10 Durham schools for at least 25 years for exchange visits
 - Working with over 100 host families
4. And we now have a functioning Youth Committee with representatives from at least 8 schools. They have held two Annual Summits with State Department guests, and they have studied water problems around the world with a focus on Arusha.

We are expanding student visits to some of our Sister Cities:

--- we established a Youth Scholarship Fund to support Durham students visiting our Sister Cities

--- As I speak, we have 3 teachers and 6 students visiting their partner school in Zhuzhou, China, following a visit from that school to Durham this past April

--- Students and teachers from the City of Medicine Academy are going to Arusha next summer to work with the Women's and Children's Clinic, built by grant from SCI to our Arusha City Committee

--- Students will be going to Toyama next summer, hosted by the Toyama College of Foreign Languages

5. In November, we will have a delegation from Kostroma, Russia visiting Durham to discuss pluralism, integration and diversity.

6. And next week, Wed, Oct 14, the Mayor of Zhuzhou, Mr. Angie He, will visit Durham.

Zhuzhou is the second largest city in Hunan Province with a metropolitan population of approximately 3 million.

Zhuzhou has 2 sister schools in North Carolina, one in Moore County, and our own School for Creative Studies.

Zhuzhou is a high tech city, where most of the high speed trains in China are produced.

He will meet with Mayor Bell, and visit two of our schools and Duke Gardens.

7. Finally, next week, we will celebrate our 40th Anniversary on Thursday, Oct 15, at our Annual Meeting and Awards Ceremony here in the Lobby and Council Chambers here ???City Hall

We will have a Reception 5:30 – 6:00, and then the Awards and brief reports from 6 to 7.

What we are most excited about as we celebrate at the Annual Meeting is the second annual Sister

Cities and Mayor's Awards for "Promoting International Understanding" -- for individuals and

organizations that help the citizens of Durham be more aware of the growing international nature of

our Durham community. This year we will honor:

--Star Sampson, Principal, Holt Elementary Language Academy, a school with a strong global curriculum

--The Durham Children's Choir

--Our 4 Rotary Clubs in Durham: Downtown, North Durham, Southwest Durham, Sunrise Durham

--And the Rotary Club of Durham, England

We hope you can join us in this celebration. Thank You